



January 17, 2014

To: Jean Godden, City Councilmember
Chair: Parks, Library, Seattle Center and Equity Committee

From: Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent

Re: Superintendent's Report

Upcoming action items for Council

SPU Seward Park - Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Project

SPU began preliminary engineering in 2009 to evaluate approximately 50 different strategies for meeting regulatory requirements related to combined sewer overflows. SPU determined, after considering street right-of-way, private property and public property and holding public forums that the most feasible solution is to build a storage tank in Seward Park.

The project is moving forward and is currently at 60% design. Parks and stakeholders, such as Friends of Seward Parks and Friends of Olmsted Parks, are weighing in as the design progresses to minimize impacts to the park character, park visitors and neighbors. Adjacent neighbors to the selected tennis court location have raised concerns about the proximity of the project site to their homes.

Magnuson Park historic district

In June 2013 two important documents were approved by the Landmarks Preservation Board for the Sand Point Naval Air Station Preservation District. These included "Controls and Incentives," which determines which architectural and landscape elements will be reviewed by the Board. Design guidelines describe the specific features to be included in new or replacement elements.

Magnuson Park leases

Redevelopment at the park is continuing. Tennis Center Sand Point (TCSP) opened in September 2013 offering programs on its 10 indoor courts. Shell and core improvements were completed at Building 11 in October 2013. This work reduces the cost of tenant improvements for future long-term tenants, such as the Waldorf High School, Sail Sand Point and Cascade Bicycle Club. The Cascade Bicycle Club lease will come to the committee for approval on Feb. 21, 2014.

Major renovations to Building 30 were mostly complete by late 2013. A renewal of the EarthCorps lease at Building 30 will come before the committee for approval in the second quarter. Key spaces include 30 non live-in artist studios in a west wing and a 22,000-square-foot community event venue.

Stabilization work on Building 18 (Fire Station) will begin in early 2014, and also reduce future tenant renovation costs. In turn, this will allow Parks to focus on attracting a tenant very closely aligned with the park mission.

Electric system upgrades began December 2013 and will connect Parks buildings to Seattle City Light power.

Seattle Asian Art Museum

The 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy provided \$9 million for a \$23 million infrastructure project at the Seattle Asian Art Museum (SAAM) in Volunteer Park. The levy money is intended as a match to money raised by the Seattle Art Museum (SAM). Unfortunately, the economic downturn that has affected the Seattle area since late 2008 has made it impossible for Seattle Art Museum to raise their share of the project costs. Earlier this year, SAM and City representatives agreed on a proposal in which the levy funds would be reprogrammed for other park-related capital projects. In exchange, Seattle Parks and Recreation would provide \$9 million for SAAM at a later date when the project is ready to proceed. Parks plans to submit legislation in the first quarter of 2014 to authorize an agreement to allow this re-programming of the levy funds and to pledge support for the future project. Concomitant legislation will reprogram the levy funds to other Parks capital needs in 2014. The City's obligation to fund the future SAAM project will be affected by reducing Parks expected allocation of Cumulative Reserve Sub-fund (CRS) monies that are used for capital needs by \$3 million per year for the years 2015 through 2017.

14th Avenue NW Park

The Ballard Urban Village is identified as a priority neighborhood for park acquisition in the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy. Rather than a traditional park acquisition, the Ballard community has prioritized the development of a park within the 100-foot-wide 14th Avenue NW right-of-way. This new park will provide accessible green space within the area bounded by NW 65th Street and NW Market Street, 15th Avenue NW to 8th Avenue NW.

The planning and public process for the 14th Avenue NW Park concluded in March 2012. Parks approved the resulting schematic design with a cost estimate for planning, design and construction of the project of \$2.9 million. In May 2012, the Levy Oversight Committee made the recommendation (subject to Council approval) to use \$2.9 million of Neighborhood Park Acquisition funding to develop the 14th Avenue NW Park. With this approval, Parks staff began to negotiate with SDOT and draft the necessary legislation to transfer a portion of the 14th Avenue NW right-of-way for the Park and to appropriate the funding to develop it. This legislation is expected to go to Council in the first quarter 2014.

In March of 2013 Parks entered into an agreement with Mithun to take this project from schematic design to completion. As this project is in the SDOT right-of-way, a Street Improvement Permit is required for construction. In August of 2013 Parks submitted the 30% project design to SDOT of review. Currently, the design team is working on revisions to the design and will submit 60% drawings to SDOT for review in late March early April. It is anticipated that the project will be advertised for bid in the early to middle of the third quarter 2014 with construction starting by the end of the quarter. Staff projects substantial completion by end of the first quarter of 2015.

O.O. Denny Park maintenance

Seattle owns a park in Kirkland because the pioneering Denny family gave the City their vacation property in the early 1900's for use as a summer camp for City children. The property was recently

annexed to the City of Kirkland; the proposed agreement provides for Kirkland to maintain and operate the park, at no cost to Seattle.

Concession leases at four park Locations

Parks usually does concession leases on an annual basis. Anything over one year requires City Council approval. We've found that one-year leases do not provide incentive for concessionaires to market their businesses or improve the stands. Therefore, we are recommending five-year leases at Gas Works, Green Lake, Madrona and Seward parks. The expected outcome is better food service for the community, and more revenue to the City.

Informational items

Parks Legacy Plan Update

With the goal of an August 2014 ballot measure, Parks is continuing to work with a citizens' committee, the Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee, to determine the size and content of the ballot measure, and whether a levy or metropolitan park district should be the funding mechanism. The Committee released their Interim Report in December, which includes a prioritized list of projects to be funded. Public input on the prioritized list, on the overall size of the package and on the funding mechanism will be gathered at 3 public meetings later this month:

- January 25, International District/Chinatown Community Center
- January 25, High Point Community Center
- January 30, Bitter Lake Community Center

The Committee will reconvene in February to develop final recommendations which will be transmitted to the Council and Mayor by mid-March.

Key Management Changes

We have recently hired two new directors and a new manager, and reassigned one of our existing directors. Michele Finnegan, who was previously our Recreation Division Director and our Human Resources Director before that, has been reassigned as our Financial Services Director. She will replace Kevin Stoops, who will retire after a 37-year career with Seattle Parks and Recreation. Kelly Guy has been hired as our new Recreation Division Director. Kelly has worked at both the Casey Family Foundation, and most recently as a director in the Human Services Department. We have also hired Hazel Bhang Barnett as the new Human Resources Director. Hazel has a long career as a public servant, having most recently been employed with King County. While there, she worked very closely with the King County Parks Levy Oversight Board. And, we have hired Joelle Hammerstad as the new Communications Manager. Joelle has worked for the department in various positions for the past 12 years.

Smoking Ban

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) and several downtown activists have requested a smoking ban in Westlake Park and Occidental Park. SPD and our Park Rangers cite the difficulty in enforcing the current 25-foot rule. Later this year Parks staff will brief the Parks Board on national practices and the latest developments in smoking bans, and will look at the policy issues surrounding an outright ban to select downtown parks, all downtown parks, or to all property Citywide under Parks' jurisdiction.

Mountain Bike Proposal

On Thursday, January 9, the Board of Park Commissioners recommended that Parks staff move forward with a pilot project, and further recommended that the proposed policy updates, as they relate to mountain bikes in greenbelts and natural areas, be put on hold for three years to give Parks staff adequate time to monitor the impact of the pilot project.

The Board felt strongly that a pilot project was needed before they take on the larger policy change to allow mountain bikes in greenbelts and/or natural areas. To that end, staff recommended that the proposed policy update be put on hold and that staff move forward with a pilot project at Cheasty Greenspace. Cheasty is the one site that has community support and an active group of volunteers to implement the project.

There would be a public process to determine the actual trail location and layout; Parks would oversee the construction, and then staff will monitor the project for three year to assess the impacts of the trails on the Greenspace and also the impact of the associated restoration work. At the end of the monitoring period, Parks staff would then make a recommendation on whether to move forward with the larger policy change, keeping in mind that there are likely some natural areas and greenbelts where mountain bike trails would be inappropriate.

What that means is that the current (1995) bicycle policy would remain in place for the time being, with no changes as it relates to bicycles in greenbelts and natural areas.

Victor Steinbrueck Park

The 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy includes \$1.6 million for public safety improvements at Victor Steinbrueck Park (VSP). VSP was constructed in 1984. The park is located within the Pike Place Market Historical District so any work will be subject to review by the Pike Place Market Historical Commission. The area around VSP is the subject of significant change. The Alaskan Way Viaduct is scheduled for demolition in 2016. The PC-1, a mixed-use development project adjacent to the market and the park, is being developed; it is currently in design with potential construction to follow in 2015/2016.

The PC-1 development will provide a direct connection from the south end of VSP both up to the Desimone Bridge and the Market and down to the central waterfront and the Aquarium. These are connections which currently do not exist today. These changes will fundamentally alter travel patterns through VSP, and the way in which people will want use VSP. Without the noise of the Viaduct, VSP will become an even more desirable place. Parks would like to issue an RFQ to hire a design consultant in 2014 to move the project forward consistent with the direction in the levy and City Council approval.

Gas Works Park Play Area Renovation

The 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy includes \$1.4 million for the renovation of the play area at Gas Works Park. Parks will begin the design process in March 2014. The first meeting with the public will be held on March 11. Parks staff will undertake the design work. The area where the previous play area was located will be brought up to current ADA and play area safety standards and new play equipment will be installed. Renovations and play equipment selection will be the subject of the public process and open for the public's review and comment. Improvements may also be made to the adjacent play barn to accommodate the indoor/outdoor play experience.

Gas Works Park is a City landmark and on the National Register so the proposal will require review by the City's Landmarks Preservation Board. There are also areas of known subsurface contamination

below the old play area so the Washington State Department of Ecology will also be involved in the review of the project.

U.S. Navy low-level radiation remediation at Magnuson Park

Building 2 upstairs original remedial scope is complete. Demolition of flooring uncovered more structural contamination and it is now being removed as well. When activity is complete, the radiation and asbestos contamination will be completely removed from the remedial area. Building 2 downstairs hanger areas require removal of a small abandoned contaminated pipe under the concrete. This will be accomplished this spring. Building 27 shed remedial activities removed all interior wall space. The shed shares a common wall with the Arena Sports hanger. The wall is not contaminated but is a structural issue. State agencies, Parks and the Navy are working on a solution to detach the shed with minimum disturbance to Arena Sports. Exterior soils and pipe line exploration around buildings 2, 12 [the old power plant next to building 2] and 27 continues. Levels found are not concentrated or considered dangerous. *All soil analyses to date indicate that radiation levels are very low.* Finishing in 2014 is still the goal provided weather and unexpected discovery do not stall the project.

The Magnuson shoreline exploration has been questioned. The Navy/Parks scope is for on-shore cleanup. It is not in the project scope and no funding exists for exploration of the offshore pipeline. If offshore contamination exists, it is buried in half a century of accumulated sediment and rock in deeper water assumed owned by the State. It is not accessible except by excavation. It is not considered a public risk at this time. Future discussion with the Navy about shoreline exploration is State driven with the City of Seattle as an interested party. State Ecology and Mr. Pollet agreed to a project update public meeting to be held this spring. To date, it has not been scheduled.

Parks Senior Staff Retreat

We look forward to welcoming Councilmember Godden to our Senior Staff Retreat at Belltown Community Center on Tuesday, January 28. We will also welcome Mayor Murray in the morning for a brief "hello." Senior staff will discuss the status of the Parks Legacy Plan, as well as 2014 division work plans. The team will also discuss what the new council districts will mean to Seattle Parks and Recreation.